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An Open Soviet Society Would Be An Aid to Peace

For once we agree with a position taken by our own government at the United Nations. We refer to the challenge by George Harrison, of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, in the Assembly's Special Political Committee last Tuesday. Mr. Harrison, an AFL-CIO vice president, spoke during debate on an Argentine revision of a Czech resolution calling for friendly cooperation among nations in culture and communications. Mr. Harrison said the Soviet Union could make a great stride forward in this respect if it (1) stopped radio jamming, (2) permitted foreign newspapers and magazines to be sold freely in Soviet cities, (3) freed foreign correspondents from censorship and (4) allowed all United Nations publications to be sold publicly in the Soviet Union. No one who has not experienced the intellectually suffocating atmosphere of Moscow, and seen the deadly conformist dullness of its press, as I did two years ago, can really understand the full meaning of these proposals. If Poland can allow the *New York Times* and the *London Times* and the *New Statesman and Nation* and *Le Monde* to be freely purchased on the streets and freely read in the coffee houses, why is the far stronger Soviet Union afraid to let its people see foreign papers? Why, 40 years after the revolution, is it still afraid to trust its own people to read and think for themselves?

Just Like the American Legion

The basic attitudes of men and governments are not to be judged by their ideologies but by their behavior. In the Pasternak affair, the head of the Young Communists who attacked a great writer elegantly as a "pig," spoke the same language as our American Legionnaires, who are always telling American radical writers to go back where they didn't come from, as that YCL-er told Pasternak. At the UN, Mr. Sobolev, the Soviet delegate, answered Mr. Harrison in the same terms invoked by our FBI, by our House Un-American Activities Committee and by the Senate Internal Security Committee. Mr. Sobolev said the Soviet Union had atom bombs to deter aggression and radio jamming to block subversive ideas. There is here the same idea that societies are menaced by "subversive" ideas, that the government must guard its people from them, that the men wielding such ideas (we call them "Communists" and they call them "counter-revolutionaries") are so superhumanly dangerous that they must be put away. Mr. Sobolev spoke the language of American rightists, the language which says people cannot be trusted to think for themselves; that they must be treated as children; that government must be their nursemaid; that the danger to government lies not in its own failure to give people justice and satisfaction, but in its failure in time to root out secret conspiracy against it.

A Break With Both Marx and Madison

This attitude flies in the face of both the Marxist and liberal traditions, both of which have their roots in the same rationalistic and materialistic philosophy which teaches that revolutions are not made by conspiracies but (in the words of our Declaration of Independence) by "a long train of abuses and usurpations." Common to both systems in their origins is a belief that man's hope rests in man's reason, and his ability to change the world for the better. To affirm that people cannot be trusted to think for themselves but must see the world only as some higher body known as a Central Committee decrees because that Committee in turn personifies something known as The Party, which is by definition always and mysteriously right, is to sink into a new mysticism, a new form of superstition. This is made to order for bureaucrats, who take refuge always in the rigidity of the rule-book. It is this rigidity which explains the violence of the Hungarian uprising, and Moscow's slow movement back toward Stalinism in fear that if it eases up there may be similar explosions in East Germany and in Poland. Such explosions could ignite a new world war. We believe that in the long run greater freedom will prove a better risk than greater repression. *The struggle for a more open Soviet society is a struggle for conditions in which peaceful transition to a less rigid-minded socialism may be possible in Eastern Europe without new convulsions.* Slowly to graft First Amendment freedoms onto the Soviet system would really be to check the evils of what Krushchev once called "the cult of personality."

Sack Those Silly Censors

Freer communication is important, not only to enable people to understand each other better, but to provide on the Soviet side those safety valves and correctives which freer dissemination of ideas allows. We heard from Krushchev what terrible mistakes Stalin made, mistakes which cost the lives of many devoted and idealistic men, whom the Soviet witch hunters destroyed. What of his mistakes in foreign policy? Was he always right? What of his successors who failed so terribly to get rid of Rakosi in Hungary when there was still time to prevent an outburst which set back the cause of peace and co-existence? Now is the time to prevent new Hungaries. How much good the Soviet Union could do itself if it began slowly to lift the curtain on freer information. A good start would be to let foreign papers be sold freely in its cities, and to abolish a censorship of foreign correspondence which is so heavy-handed and erratic that it only makes enemies of those who have to work under its wooden controls. These two moves—signalizing a new thaw in Moscow—could be a mighty contribution to peace, and to human hopes of co-existence.

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State Dept. Won't Let Waldo Frank Lecture on Walt Whitman in Peking

When Wall St. Corporation Lawyers Defend the Right of Radicals to Travel

A committee of eight, chosen by the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, mainly from the most blue-blooded of Wall Street's corporation law firms*, has just recommended unanimously that passports ought not to be denied anyone, even members of the Communist party, for their political opinions.

The Bar Association committee, in its newly published "Freedom to Travel" (financed by the Fund for the Republic and published by Dodd, Mead), also did itself proud in resisting the notion that the fair trial should be subordinated to the convenience of the secret police. Only one of the eight —Mr. MacVeagh—was prepared to relinquish the right to cross-examine accusing witnesses in passport hearings whenever the government certified that this was necessary to protect informers.

Hostile to Faceless Informers

Four members of the bar committee, Messrs. Coudert, Delano, Fales and Swope, would under no circumstances allow a man's right to travel to be taken away without a chance to confront his accuser. Mr. Fisher and Mr. Workum would allow an exception only in the case of passport applicants who had been given access to highly classified information. Mr. Fleischmann would allow a temporary withholding of passport for six months where the Secretary of State personally certified that security would be jeopardized by a hearing.

The Committee's stand on these basic questions of substance and procedure eloquently testifies to the special role that legal tradition and the legal profession at their best may play in preserving basic safeguards against hysteria, prejudice and fear. The spectacle of a group of corporation lawyers defending the right of radicals to travel and challenging the pet informer shibboleth of the FBI runs directly counter to Marxist and democratic stereotypes. It would be impossible to get eight labor leaders of equal stature to take as courageous a stand, and it will be difficult to keep Congress from stampeding in the other direction when passport legislation comes before it at the next session, though the former represent the "working class" and the latter "the people."

Acquiesce in Area Control

Though applauding the report's virtues, we fear that the pressure of cold war distortions have had their effect on the Bar Committee in two respects. One is its acquiescence in the idea that the Department should have the right to shut off whole countries from travel. The unspoken premise is that a fundamental liberty may be treated as an instrument of policy, as a means of pressure on a foreign government or to satisfy the preconceptions of whatever crowd happens to be dominant in the State Department.**

When Is Travel Pro-Communist?

"One of the standards [applied by the State Department] requires rejection of [passport] applications from persons who are going abroad to engage in activities which will advance the Communist movement. The difficulty with this standard is its vagueness. What will advance the Communist movement is a question on which there may well be differences of opinion; and although this standard requires that advancement of the movement be the purpose of the travel, the standard remains difficult, if not impossible, to apply. Indeed, it is a rare administrator who would on his own initiative resolve any doubt in favor of the applicant. The inevitable tendency is to deal with rumor as fact, association as membership, and advocacy as incitement. This discretionary power, in short, is foreign to American standards of fairness and justice."

—New York Bar Report on "Freedom to Travel."

The idiocies and contradictions this area control breeds may be seen in the suit which has just been filed here by the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee on behalf of the distinguished writer, Waldo Frank. Mr. Frank has been invited to lecture on Walt Whitman at Peking University. One might have expected Communist China to refuse him a visa, since Whitman is the great poet of the free democratic faith. Instead it is the State Department which has refused to let Mr. Frank use his passport for that purpose.

"A State Department with a vital policy" Mr. Frank protests would be urging people like himself to go and speak in China. Our country stands to benefit by letting young Chinese read our greatest poet and hear one of our most enlightened contemporary intellectuals. Mr. Dulles only fortifies China's most hardened Stalinists by maintaining this wooden curtain of his own.

Fair Trial, or Crystal Ball?

The second point on which we differ from the Committee is that it would allow some passport restrictions "upon a substantial showing of the likelihood of action abroad which would be hostile to the national security."

We believe this to be open to several objections. One is practical: these loopholes — though strictly defined by the Committee—are broad enough to allow the Department to continue some of its worst practices. A second is legal: the Committee, in drawing an analogy with injunctions, is in error; injunctions forbid certain illegal acts, they do not deprive people of the right to engage in lawful conduct such as travel on the suspicion of abuse.

The third is philosophical: Law and fair trial lose their meaning when we set out to punish men not for what they have done but for what they *might* do. To deny a man the right to travel because he might abuse it is the same as putting him under "preventive arrest" in a concentration camp. One forbids travel abroad, the other at home, on suspicion.

***The eight: Fifield Workum, chairman, a partner in Thacher & Bartlett; Ewen C. MacVeagh, of Davis, Polk, Wardwell, Sunderland & Kiendl; Alexis C. Coudert, of Coudert Bros.; Halliburton Fales 2d of White and Case; William A. Delano of Winthrop, Stimson, Putnam and Roberts; Manly Fleischmann of Fleischmann, Jaeckle, Stokes & Hitchcock; Gerard Swope, Jr., trade regulation counsel for General Electric; and Adrian S. Fisher, vice-president and counsel of the Washington Post. Only Mr. Fisher has liberal associations.**

****The report notices, for example, that in all the years we did not recognize Franco, no effort was made to deny U. S. passports for travel to Spain, and that when Mussolini attacked Ethiopia, the Department shut off travel not to Italy, the aggressor, but to Ethiopia, its victim!**

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A Document Not Available Elsewhere in U.S. Press: British's Labor's New Foreign Policy Manifesto

Disengagement in Germany, Neutral Middle East, Red China in the UN

Since the Democratic Party here has failed to provide any coherent opposition in foreign policy, we thought readers would like to see the foreign policy sections of the new election manifesto which the British Labor Party has just published called, "The Future Labour Offers You," particularly in connection with the Berlin crisis. We suggest this might be the basis for discussion in any political or peace group to which you may belong. The relevant portions follow:

"Because of the Cold War, both sides rely on amassing nuclear deterrents which, if they are ever used, will utterly destroy civilization.

"Because of these nuclear deterrents, mutual fear and suspicion grow and political settlement becomes even more difficult to achieve.

"It is essential that one Great Power should break through this deadly circle. We believe that Britain, rid of the Tory Government, can do so. And Labour has worked out its plan for this peace initiative. Our plan covers both political settlements and disarmament.

"The three gravest danger areas in the world today are Central Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East.

No Nuclear Arms for Germany

"In Europe, Labour will press its plan for disengagement.

"Labour will propose the establishment of a neutral zone consisting of East and West Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Inside this zone, armaments would be reduced, nuclear weapons banned, foreign forces—Russian and NATO—withdrawn. The freedom and security of the area would be guaranteed by all the Powers concerned.

"Disengagement would not only lessen tension but also help the free and peaceful unification of Germany.

"In the Middle East, Labour proposes Great Power negotiations to neutralize the area and take it out of Cold War politics.

"This is Labour's four-point policy:

"1. Support the United Nations in guaranteeing the frontiers of all Middle East states, including Israel.

"2. Establish diplomatic relations with the United Arab Republic.

"3. Set up an Economic Council for the Middle East to fight poverty and ensure fairer distribution of oil profits.

"4. Support a fresh attempt at an Arab-Israeli settlement. This must include Arab recognition of Israel and a solution of the Arab refugee problem.

"In the Far East, the Labour Government will vote and urge other countries to vote for the admission of the Communist Government of China to the United Nations.

"This is the essential first step towards any settlement in the Far East. It is absurd that the Tory Government, which recognizes the Chinese Peoples Republic, should continue to connive at the denial of representation in the United Nations to a country of nearly 600 million people.

"Labour believes that the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu, which have twice in three years brought America and China to the brink of war, should be evacuated by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces and handed back to the Government of China.

"We shall also urge that Formosa be placed under UN administration until the people of the island can themselves decide their own future without intimidation.

Ending the Arms Race

"Our aim is not only to rid the world of H-bombs and other weapons of mass destruction, but to cut *all* armed forces and armaments to the points where aggression would be impossible. Not until that has been achieved can we concentrate on our true socialist task—banishing poverty from the face of the earth and sharing the peaceful blessings of scientific progress.

"The Labour Government's first contribution to disarmament will be a decision to suspend British nuclear tests at once, whatever others Powers may decide. We have also proposed that all patrol flights with nuclear weapons should be stopped immediately . . . If our advice has been accepted, the Russians—who were the first to suspend tests—would have had no excuse for resuming them.

"Ending nuclear tests — and with them the danger of poisoning mankind by radiation—will be only a beginning. *Labour will propose a disarmament conference to draw up a treaty which will*

—*reduce,* arms, manpower and military expenditure.

—*destroy* all stocks of nuclear weapons and means of delivering them, including missile bases and bombers.

—*abolish* all chemical and biological weapons.

—*provide* safeguards against surprise attacks.

"To be effective, the Disarmament Treaty will require, above all, international inspection and control. These we believe should be enforced through the United Nations."

Federation of American Scientists Advocates Permanent Cessation of Tests

The Council of the Federation of American Scientists, after a meeting in New York on Nov. 23, issued a statement few newspapers covered advocating permanent cessation of testing subject only to the condition that the detection system be put into operation within an agreed period. "Certainly any cessation period," said the Council statement "must be longer than the period required merely to require another series of test explosions." The U. S. offer at Geneva is for a one-year suspension renewable annually.

The Council statement noted that "considerable weight is being given to the military importance of continued weapons development." It said, however, that security was no longer available through military means. The Council declared that present nuclear stockpiles were now large enough to destroy the human race, that there was never likely to be an effective defense, and that even those surviving an initial attack "could not live on the surface of the earth until one to three years had passed, because of the lethal effects of the long-lasting radiation."

The Federation's executive committee is: Chairman, Augustus H. Fox, Prof. of Mathematics, Union College; Vice Chairman, Walter Selove, Prof. of Physics, Univ. of Pa.; Secretary, Harry Palevsky, Physicist, Brookhaven; Treasurer, Leonard Herzenberg, Biochemist, Nat. Inst. of Health; Paul M. Doty, Prof. of Chemistry, Harvard; and Frank Ham, Physicist, G. E. Research Lab.

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Japan and Byrnes; Nixon Goes Profound in London; Moscow Undersells Esso on Benzene

The French Elections: Another Step Toward Fascism and Civil Conflict

The key to the French elections and the French future lies in the fact that despite de Gaulle's orders the Army in Algeria herded the Moslems to the polls and elected a group of Uncle Toms. With these Moslems it will be impossible, as de Gaulle hoped, to negotiate a settlement because their own people do not trust or respect them. They will only go to swell the rigged majority in the new Assembly which is against any negotiated settlement in Algeria. De Gaulle's failure to make his orders obeyed in North Africa even before the elections foreshadows his failure on a larger scale now that these same elements have emerged in control of the Assembly.

How the Elections Were Rigged

The elections have produced a crop of faceless right-wing yes-men, elected by shrewd manipulation of the new electoral laws. These new laws made it possible vastly to exaggerate the right-ward swing of French opinion. If the Assembly seats had been distributed by proportional representation on the basis of the first vote the right-wing Independents would have led with 93 votes, the Communists would have come second with 88, Jacques Soustelle's de Gaullist Union of the New Republic would have been third with 82 votes and the Socialists fourth with 72. Instead, by uniting on one candidate and in almost all cases dumping overboard the pro-de Gaulle Socialists, the rightists were able to emerge after the second balloting with 188 votes for the UNR, 132 votes for the Independents, 40 votes for the Socialists and 10 votes for the Communists. The "landslide" was more a matter of electoral rigging than of votes.

A coalition of military men, Algerian "white supremacists," old style reactionaries and new crop Fascists has emerged to power in the French Assembly on de Gaulle's coat-tails. He, who hoped to unite France, may end by dividing it more deeply than ever. The elections, far from destroying Communism in France, may prove to have strengthened it by destroying and discrediting non-Communist left elements particularly the Socialists and leaving the Communists as the only organized core of a new Resistance. In Algeria, too, the extremists on both sides have been strengthened. France has now become a new major point of world instability.

Crusading Journalist to the Senate

A miracle of present day politics was the election to the U. S. Senate from Alaska of Ernest Gruening, who made his reputation as a crusading journalist on the team Oswald Garrison Villard gathered about himself on The Nation in the 20's. Senator-elect Gruening invaded Maine in the 30's, establishing its first successful New Deal daily and then after a period as editor of the New York Post became Governor of Alaska. His election brings a fighting liberal of the George Norris variety to the U. S. Senate.

Once Over Lightly

We are relieved that the committee here from Japan to study changes in its Constitution did not get to see former Secretary of State Byrnes as planned. We'd hate to have the Japanese go home and legalize separate but equal schools for Caucasians. . . . "In replying to reporters' questions," Drew Middleton cabled the *New York Times* (Nov. 29) ecstatically about Nixon's press conference in London, "Mr. Nixon gave an impression of sincerity, frankness and at times profundity. The Cyprus issue, he said, can 'only be settled' by a conference between Britain, Greece and Turkey at which they could sit down and work out the problem. But the settlement, he declared, should not lead to 'chaos'." This is so profound that we suggest Nixon run in 1960 on the slogan, "Make Our Next President Even Profounder." . . . We were stirred by the statement Mr. Bruce Boehm, president of a Standard Oil subsidiary, issued when he heard Dow Chemical had bought Soviet benzene several cents a gallon cheaper than Esso sells it. "This is a little bit new," Mr. Boehm said softly, "to have Iron Curtain materials imported into this country, and I should think it would be a matter with which the American government might be concerned." The only problem is whether to bomb the Soviet Union or Dow Chemical.

IFS Speaks: Dec. 12 on Drift to Nuclear War, Unitarian Church, 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, 8:30 p. m; Dec. 15, ECLC Bill of Rights Day Rally, Grand Ball Room, Hotel New Yorker, 8:30 p. m.

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